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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m.
The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Your goodness to us, O God, is beyond our measure and Your grace to us is not restrained. In spite of missing the mark and seeing too much our own way, You allow your blessings to flow and Your mercies never to cease. We pray that this day we will open our hearts and minds to the daily gifts of faith and hope and love and pray that these gifts will brighten our day and make us faithful in Your service. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

The point or order is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 927), an act to seek international sanctions against the Castro government in Cuba, to plan for support of a transition government leading to a democratically elected government in Cuba, and for other purposes.

THE MIDDLE EAST

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Patrick Henry said "Gentlemen may cry peace, peace. But there is no peace." In quick succession, four blasts have extinguished 54 lives and scarred another 210.

Hamas has demonstrated again that it is a murderous group of fanatics who are so poisoned with hate—so obsessed with slaughter—that no innocent life is safe.

Terrorism experts have stated that Hamas and its allies will attempt to inflict this sort of horror on Americans. We must work together with the Israelis in stopping these madmen.

Arafat must also shoulder his share of the blame for this situation. He has failed to prevent the uses of territory under his administration from being used as a staging area for these plots.

He has failed to comply with the conditions of the Oslo peace accords that

required that he remove those sections of the Palestine National Covenant which call for the destruction of Israel.

Until such time as Arafat lives up to those agreements he has signed and eliminates Hamas from areas for which he bears responsibility, the United States should know that there is little good in negotiating with him.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Democrats are uniting behind a proposal that would make modest but important improvements in America's health insurance. This is a bill that was sponsored by the gentlewoman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA] that would basically guarantee that insurance companies could not deny health insurance coverage for preexisting conditions and also would improve what we call portability, the ability to take your insurance with you or to guarantee that your insurance is renewed even if you lose group coverage.

Today we have over 150 House Democrats who are cosponsoring the Roukema measure, including myself. We are challenging the House Republican leadership to let this bill come to the floor without loading it up with all kinds of other proposals that would make it less possible for the bill to pass. This is something that President Clinton endorsed in his State of the Union Address.

The time has come now for bipartisan support for this health security and health insurance reform for all Americans. I call upon the House leadership to bring this bill to the floor so that we can see better guarantees that preexisting conditions would not prevent someone from getting health insurance and that someone who loses their

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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